Washington Zoning Commission

By Email

RE: Illegal commercial rooming house at 121 West Shore Rd.

Dear Zoning Commission,

Over the past 40 years, hundreds of Washington, Warren and Kent residents, volunteers, and local non-profits have invested countless hours and millions of dollars to protect Lake Waramaug: to improve the water quality, the watershed, and the viewshed. We are all justifiably proud of the clean lake, the wonderful community we have built together, and the regional resource of the State Park and beaches. A small number of absentee homeowners have realized that they can take advantage of the beauty of the Lake and the demand for short term rentals to enrich themselves at the expense of the resident Lake community.

Many “desirable” towns just like Washington across the nation are being forced to deal with this problem. The ones that have taken definitive action to shut down short term rentals in single family housing zones learned the hard way that flooding such a community with transient renters destroys the community that was there before. We don’t want this to happen to our town and it should be stopped NOW before it is too late.

The Zoning Board is charged with the awesome responsibility of protecting the Town and now is the moment when we need you to step up.

There is no going back on this. Drafting new legislation will simply grandfather the problem. Please enforce the residential zoning laws currently on the books (short term rentals for commercial profit aren’t anything close to single family housing and don’t belong in the zone) and not allow “alternative versions” to dissuade you from doing right by your town.

Thank you for your time and continuing effort on our behalf.

Sincerely,

Shauna Holiman and Robert Hackney

125 West Shore Road, New Preston